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AMENDMENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-69 without prejudice and add new claims 70-84 as follows:

1-69 (Cancelled)

70. (New) A method of killing or inhibiting the proliferation of extracellular microorganisms within the respiratory tract of an animal, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a flow-controlled source of nitric oxide gas;

delivering the nitric oxide gas to the animal's respiratory tract through inhalation; and wherein the inhalation of nitric oxide gas results in direct exposure of nitric oxide gas to the microorganisms within the respiratory tract.

71. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through spontaneous breathing of the animal.

72. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through a ventilator.

73. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas flows from a pressurized cylinder containing nitric oxide gas.

74. (New) The method of claim 70 further comprising the step of diluting the nitric oxide gas, prior to inhalation.

75. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the flow of nitric oxide gas from the flow-controlled source of nitric oxide gas is regulated by a valve.

76. (New) The method of claim 75 wherein the nitric oxide gas flows from a nitric oxide substrate source containing a compound capable of producing nitric oxide gas.
77. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in a continuous flow.
78. (New) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in pulsed-doses.
79. (New) A method of suppressing a respiratory infection associated with microorganisms within the respiratory tract of an animal, the method comprising the steps of:
- providing a pressurized source of nitric oxide gas;
 - diluting the nitric oxide gas;
 - delivering the diluted nitric oxide gas to the animal by inhalation resulting in direct exposure of nitric oxide gas to microorganisms within the animal's respiratory tract.
80. (New) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is diluted with air.
81. (New) The method of claim 79 further comprising the steps of monitoring a concentration of the nitric oxide gas.
82. (New) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through a ventilator.
83. (New) The method of claim 79 further comprising the step of providing for a nasal cannula to interface with the animal wherein nitric oxide gas is inhaled through the nasal cannula.
84. (New) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in pulsed-doses